

¹ N/A

² This entire survey is slanted. By limiting the timeframe to the past two years, it is clear that you are setting things up to blame the previous administration for any issues that EPA has had with scientific integrity. You should be asking the questions about EPA over the long run and not specifically limited to the past two years.

³ None now since we have a new administration

⁴ (b) (5)

⁵ QA/QC is key to make sure the science produced is reproducible. Most of the time either time or resources are lacking to make that possible.

⁶ No concerns

⁷ In some ways, it's great to have a new scientific integrity honor award. In other ways, that award is rewarding people for just doing their jobs...as if those who are not recognized for upholding scientific integrity are otherwise not adhering to its principles. I think this is just a note of caution on the interpretation of that award.

⁸ None.

⁹

Lately, there has been particular pressure to (b) (5)

(b) (5) These on top of our core work, it's been a nightmare. The pressure is at a screaming peak and degrades the caliber of the work being performed in order to pass these high profile cases. I worry about this tarnishing the integrity of the work being performed. We were to hire more people during the (b) (6) to alleviate this somewhat, but that was frozen and we still desperately need those new people.

¹⁰ This survey mixes past two years with present so is difficult to respond to. Very different situation at EPA on scientific integrity with current administration than last (see situation with (b) (5))...but there are no controls in place to prevent what happened during last administration from happening again -- if we were to revert to similar situation in the future.

¹¹ na

¹² Not at this time.

¹³ Gaps in scientific integrity policies (or the absence thereof) between EPA and other regulatory scientific federal and state agencies.

¹⁴

This is a joke. No real or substantive changes will take place. EPA managers will always have control and be able to manipulate and retaliate against scientists. If there is a scientific disagreement, then employees can be moved or removed from projects and a sycophant can be found to replace them. Promotions can be used to buy loyalty. There are limited options for employees and even those are ineffectual.

¹⁵ I do not have anything useful to add.

¹⁶ I think a definition of "science" that is not circular in its reference would help. For example "science" could be defined as "the pursuit of new knowledge based on fact based reasoning that is independently verifiable and reproducible." It does not include the word "science", or "scientific" anywhere within it.

¹⁷ None

²⁴ N/A

²⁵

Strengthen the IGs office - the regional IGs are easy targets for retaliation.

²⁶ We put too much concern about what comes out of a machine in a chemistry laboratory and not enough focus on other types of data collection.

²⁷ N/A

²⁸

Scientists may convey scientific information to managers, but we don't necessarily know what information is being conveyed to decision makers. Thus, staff may think a decision is being made based on all information, but staff may not know for sure. There needs to be accountability for staff to know what information is being conveyed and used.

²⁹

Perhaps, if not already done, provide Scientific Integrity personnel who make decisions re: interference (especially by management and political appointees) whistleblower protections associated with retaliation.

³⁰ N/A

³¹ I feel that undoing counter-productive policy changes are vital for scientific integrity, and ensuring that future administrations and outside organizations have limited influence on larger Agency issues to ensure that we continue to make progress in these endeavors.

³² As a policy person and an end user of scientific data, it was often difficult to answer this survey since my actual work has a high level of integrity in the scientific data that is collected for my use, while there were things happening at a higher level in the Region and in the Agency that I had an opinion about, but less of a direct experience. And I think there is a larger question of integrity, not just as it relates to science, that I struggled to stifle in my responses. Lastly, science is not all research, and this survey seemed to treat it that way. Some science is just about collecting the routine samples from the environment and using them to assess current status of our work. It's not always about finding something new and publishing in a peer-reviewed journal. Sometimes it is just about collecting the data and taking an action in a Federal Register notice.

³³ N/A

³⁴ N/A

³⁵ The hiring process should be more focused on ensuring that managers understand the scientific qualifications required for particular jobs and consider pertinent experience of candidates as a significant criterion in selecting new employees.

³⁶ The Agency can be forced to "do something" in situations where the condition is temporary - for example in flooded areas. Flood waters recede instead of sampling and testing flood water, the effort should be spent mapping flooded areas and identifying potential large contamination sources within them. Then as flood waters recede implement sampling plans for identification of contamination in sediment or other deposited material. The Agency should prepare to empirically defend against being pressured into performing these types of wasteful exercises in appeasement. Prepare with case studies or economic or scientific analysis to demonstrate that data acquired in these situations does not serve to characterize or to prepare the Agency for the responses that we are authorized by statute to perform.

³⁷ No other scientific integrity concerns.

³⁸ Examples of scientific integrity, consequences of the lack of scientific integrity, etc.

³⁹ None

⁴⁰ None

⁴¹ no

⁴² N/A

⁴³ none now

⁴⁴ Situations which likely do not rise to the level of a violation of the Scientific Integrity Policy, but arise due to incompetent management by highly skilled staff (and convincing talkers) operating outside their area of capability. This occurs in parallel to more senior level management not knowing how to elicit the actual ground truth.

⁴⁵ N/A

⁴⁶ None

⁴⁷ someone taking credit for work they did not do

⁴⁸ Science is observation and clear, unbiased analysis, not belief

⁴⁹ It would help to have talking points for all employees on how the EPA is countering inappropriate pressure from industry and political appointees.

⁵⁰ There is a big push right now to cap most scientists in regional offices ((b) (6) is an example) at GS12. Historically, most career scientists in the regions could achieve GS13. Not sure if this is a holdover from the last administration, but regardless it impacts EPA's ability to hire and retain the brightest minds to address some of the most complex problems facing our nation and the world today. The cost of living associated with working in proximity to a regional office such as (b) (6) is large, and a GS12 salary for a scientist's entire career is simply not adequate. I believe hiring and retaining staff with the right skill sets is the scientific integrity challenge of the future. Without the best minds in the business, EPA will struggle to adequately address the enormous environmental challenges in front of us. The effort to cap all scientists at GS12 in (b) (6) seems very misguided. This is not occurring at the same level in all regions and makes me question why this is occurring. It is demoralizing to staff, results in a lack of expertise, and is ultimately not sustainable as not many career scientists can live in close proximity to an office (such as (b) (6)) where the cost of living is so high.

⁵¹ N/A

⁵² No Comments

⁵³ None at this time

⁵⁴ I would like to learn more about what safeguards are being implemented to help prevent the political administration and appointees from being able to drastically harm the scientific culture at the EPA. I was not an employee of EPA until (b) (6), but I was alarmed by what I was hearing as a citizen.

⁵⁵ Attitude that ORD is the only research arm of the EPA

⁵⁶ Managers bullying staff to bury scientific discourse

⁵⁷ In the former administration, my impression is that career senior leaders were afraid of political appointees so the senior leaders pressured scientists

(b) (5)

The current administration has started off on good footing. They need to demonstrate, with vignettes or other ways, how they are supporting scientific integrity.

⁵⁸ More inclusion of scientists and SME in key decisions and unique problems w/i the Region.

⁵⁹ None that I can think of at this time.

⁶⁰ Conflicts of interest abound, and are central to these scientific integrity concerns.

⁶¹ No comment at this time.

⁶² none.

⁶³ NA

⁶⁴ NONE

⁶⁵ None

⁶⁶ N/A

⁶⁷ How EPA is moving to address scientific integrity concerns should be communicated to the public to assist in rebuilding trust.

⁶⁸ No basis to judge

⁶⁹ clearer transparency on how EPA dedicates resources to scientific research it conducts.

The last question was great. Hold people accountable for violations of the policy. I strongly believe that upper management in (b) (6) in the last four years allowed stuff to happen and did not suffer any consequences. A good example is that (b) (5)

Was anyone held accountable for that? Is the (b) (6) director who allowed that to happen still there? Also, the (b) (5) That is a violation of scientific integrity too. She should be hired back.

71 n/a

72

The economic impact of EPA's regulatory decisions and ways to ensure that we adhere to scientific integrity principles in our economic analyses.

73 N/A

74 None.

75 I don't have any.

76

Not only should scientific integrity be followed in the processes of science but it should be applied in the organizational planning as well. For example, our (b) (6), (b) (5)

[REDACTED]

⁷⁷ Not everything can be top priority projects at EPA due to FTE, funding, management and high level decision makers focus and time. However, some critical base program scientific areas suffer with not being fully or properly implemented despite federal statute and regulations, policy, guidance etc. because other more issue of the day takes too much precedence. This contributes to significant base program erosion.

⁷⁸ N/A

⁷⁹

One survey mentioned that decision makers in the Agency should be held accountable for lapses in scientific integrity. There are cases where this would be appropriate, but generally this may discourage reporting - not only fear of retaliation against oneself, but adverse outcomes to others (managers, coworkers) who either went along with or passed the message from political appointees who are in the positions of power.

⁸⁰ Not applicable.

⁸¹ None

⁸²

⁸³ .

⁸³

Agency managers operate in a world governed by fear - they fear lossing their position, being retaliated against, being outside the narrow conformity the supervision classes and the SES program teach and demand - if managers are making decsions based on fear - we cannot have integrity

⁸⁴ Nothing at this time.

⁸⁵ This was very thorough.

⁸⁶ None.

87

When councils or panels focussed on Scientific Integrity are dissolved, or scientists and scientific ethicists are replaced with people without a science background, particularly industry officials, scientific integrity is in danger.

88 NA

89 No questions that would take on personal bias of staff - claiming science but not really having openness to the truth because of bias and personal agendas. Might be political but also can be other things they are histrionic about. Some still think (figuratively) the Earth is flat with 4 corners because they like it that way and it serves their personal bias. They are not open to better data and fresh scientifically grounded ideas. Scientific integrity demands openness.

90

I'm concerned that this survey does not match the reality of work performed by most EPA employees. I've worked for EPA for over (b) (6), and I don't think I've ever really done "science" as envisioned by the questions in this survey. This survey seems to be intended for true research scientists (ORD folk) or people who use science to make policy (EPA HQs), not your run of the mill EPA regional inspectors, permit writers, corrective action specialists, grant specialists, budget professionals, etc.

91 none

92 NA

93

Scientific integrity can never be improved when you have people working here with only one opinion and are too close minded to see outside of that.

94 Thanks but this has been one of the more in depth surveys from HQ.

⁹⁵ na

⁹⁶ You requested all employees to take this survey yet did not make it a user friendly survey for all. Absolutely crazy.

⁹⁷

Note that a main issue is "trust". The office is supposed to show a strong support of scientific integrity but when even the media shows things that EPA is not addressing scientifically, the Science Integrity team seems to be silent. This may be seen as that office having fear of retaliation. If that is the case, then what is left for regular scientists? Trust has to be built again.

⁹⁸ I have no concerns at this time.

⁹⁹ NA

¹⁰⁰ Need to address the interplay between ethics and scientific integrity.

¹⁰¹ N/A

¹⁰² All employees, especially, at the highest levels should be held accountable. Especially, in cases, that it has been found that upper management has altered, modified, or caused an unnecessary delay in any scientific findings that will have an impact on all of our citizens.

¹⁰³ don't really have scientific integrity concerns in (b) (6). Seems like looking for a solution to a non-existent problem.

¹⁰⁴ None.

¹⁰⁵ My survey answers are skewed in that the organization I am in (b) (6) and does not participate fully in scientific analysis although I do.

¹⁰⁶ n/a

¹⁰⁷ I believe scientific findings were suppressed during the previous Administration. If the same or a like-minded Administration returns to power, I have little confidence that EPA's Scientific Integrity Policy will make the slightest difference.

¹⁰⁸ None

¹⁰⁹ Funding issues and collaborators. Sometimes our biggest headaches are influenced by others who feel that they don't have to abide by EPA's scientific integrity policy. Educate the Regions.

¹¹⁰ As a representative of the EPA with the common man it is discouraging to know that the majority of business owners fear the EPA! The average business owner is afraid of the EPA. Just think about that for a moment! Is this the legacy you want to leave? I would suggest that as much as the average business man fears the EPA, the average EPA employee fears EPA management. Just something to think about.

¹¹¹ none

¹¹² Can you create guidelines for requests for paper retractions? It doesn't seem like something any individual should be able to decide to do on their own. It makes EPA look terrible.

¹¹³ The technical support group in the Region is not properly staffed so we (b) (6) end up making decisions in areas we are not qualified because there is no assistance and we don't have time to properly explore scientific questions such as the (b) (5)

¹¹⁴ this survey was too long

¹¹⁵ Political appointees are educated. They know what they can do to influence or change decisions without technically breaking the rules. They know how to bend the rules.

¹¹⁶ As I mentioned previously, in the (b) (6) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] there has recently been pushback for employees in the
(b) (5), (b) (6) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The arguments have been lack of staff in the science branches
and that some of the tasks may be more on the administrative side.
However, the justifications have nuances and still qualify the tasks as being
scientifically based.

¹¹⁷ No comment

¹¹⁸ same as above

¹¹⁹ During the past 2 or 3 years I have not been offer mandatory scientific
integrity training the used to be required.

¹²⁰ N/A

¹²¹ stakeholder capacity.

¹²² None.

¹²³ The clearance and data management policies need to continue to evolve to
support scientific integrity and add value to to process.

¹²⁴ please translate the policy into "real life examples" as it pertains to each
Office's duties.

¹²⁵ I will not comment for fear of reprisal.

¹²⁶ Don't have any suggestions

¹²⁷ n/a

¹²⁸ create regional committee

Authorship on agency documents, especially those which may take years to progress through various drafts to final, can be sometimes variable.

Guidance on authorship or appropriate attribution may be helpful, especially if consideration of a decades-long process is included.

¹³⁰ Better support for staff in Regional offices based on existing best practices at (b) (6). I would feel better supported at (b) (6) than in (b) (6).

¹³¹ None

¹³² none

¹³³ NA

¹³⁴ No comment

¹³⁵ n/a

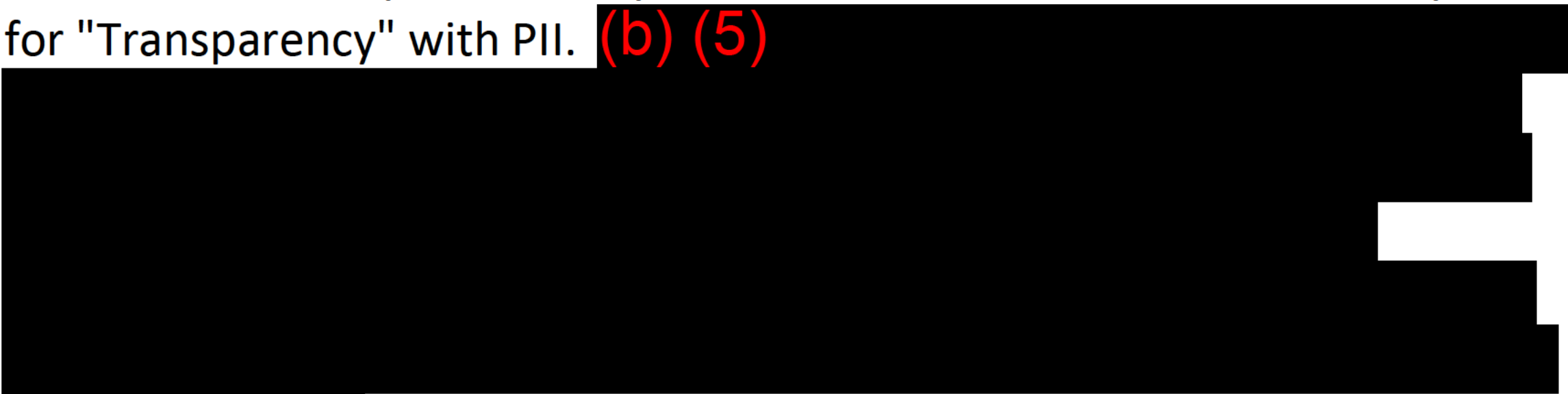
¹³⁶ Thank you for all you do!

¹³⁷ I have no further comments.


¹³⁸ This survey (maybe rightly) was geared towards scientific staff, but it made it difficult to answer the questions. In my case, most of my answers are based on observation, not actual participation.

¹³⁹ No annual reports last few years.

¹⁴⁰ I'm not sure where to mention that this Agency treats Confidential Business Information with more "Confidentiality" than it treats Personally Identifiable Information. Compare the way CBI is treated under TSCA versus the push for "Transparency" with PII. (b) (5)



¹⁴¹ (b) (5), (b) (7)(A)



¹⁴² Get rid of the LEAN management process

¹⁴³ Provision of clear, non-political entities to turn to where there are allegations of violation of scientific integrity at EPA. The last few years showed us that that process cannot always be within the agency.

¹⁴⁴ Scientific integrity should not be divorced from integrity. Supervisors should act with integrity in all personnel-related matters.

145

I recall you interact with your colleagues from other Agencies (FDA, USDA, etc.)...anything we can learn from them? Or even other countries?

146

Someday--and maybe I don't know where to find it--I would like to see a repository of the options we didn't take, and the reasons we didn't take them. Then I would have more confidence that my science was adequately considered, even if it didn't prevail in the decision.

147

We cannot ignore the complicity of career SESers who willingly cooperated with political appointees in the previous administration to undermine career scientists. Some of these folks accelerated their climb up the career ladder because they were willing to cooperate... others that did not were forced out or reassigned to less prestigious positions. This has a chilling effect on all staff, because we see what happens when someone is brave enough to challenge improper behavior, even at the most senior levels. Why would a lower level scientist speak out under these circumstances?

148 I think this whole survey is missing the point. Certain areas of the agency's work as it it tied to its mission have become politized. I personally did not experience a lot of interference or pressure to conduct rushed or poor science. I did not feel pressure to change the outcomes of scientific results. These statements pertain to work areas/program areas we were told/authorized to work on. However there were large areas of work that we could not work on. So there was not interference/pressure in those work areas because there was not active work. The work was just shut down and there was no need for any level of management or staff to feel pressure. I think you should have included questions about whether you had work/program areas that were active and then shut down and work stopped or funding was eliminated. In other words, I am not sure there was a ton of bad science within the agency. I think there was just zero science being done in certain areas of work that the Agency historically worked on or perhaps should work on since it fits within the Agency's mission.

149 N/A

150 want protections from white house, HQ, but also want people held accountable for violations of scientific integrity.

151 N/A

152 N/A

153 Yes, take a look at the previous question and comments. The issue is across this country at a large scale, and pretending that EPA alone is on this mess is not likely going to resolve it since we are pushed around hard by other groups which have more power much of the time.

154 Some aspects of this survey (period in question and the structure of some of the questions) definitely feel like a "push poll", striving to achieve certain predetermined outcomes in the results (i.e. casting the policies of the previous presidential administration toward scientific integrity in a negative light).

155 Not applicable

¹⁵⁶ I hope that there will be accountability for career staff, including those Trump appointees who embedded themselves into career positions overseeing scientific staff, (b) (6)

¹⁵⁷ N/A

¹⁵⁸ N/A

¹⁵⁹ This survey is over the past 2 years. Science integrity has improved in the past year.

¹⁶⁰

I have felt support for my research and findings. When research (mine or other) gets used in regulatory analysis, it is more subject to interpretation. Interpretation is reasonable within limits, but it sometimes gets stretched.

¹⁶¹ The timelines do not align with the (b) (6) and responses better represent experiences in the organization prior to the (b) (6)

¹⁶² All concerns have been address

¹⁶³ Offer confidentiality.

¹⁶⁴ Lack of diversity of opinion on science among EPA staff

¹⁶⁵ This survey is way too long. This is why staff don't participate in these surveys.

we need good training to be made available to even more EPA staff on Risk Communication. The training that EPA HQ provided in May 2021, through a contract to COMPASS, was excellent and one of the best trainings I have been to in my (b) (6) at EPA. See (b) (6) at EPA HQ for more information. Please find more funding for this training and get it out to the regions either in person or on Teams. thanks.

DSO question at 57% asked if we knew about DSOs before survey. If we answered no, we were still required to answer the next question at 58% about our DSO experience in the past. Please disregard my answers at 58%.

this survey was too long.

The confusion over where science ends and policy begins contributes to general concerns about scientific integrity. More concrete examples that differentiate those spheres would be useful.

Our scientific integrity officials are EPA senior management. Given in my situation I was (b) (6). It did not feel like they were an impartial, independent party to the situation. It would help if that was clear and/or a new HQ office that dealt just with scientific integrity issues separate of our senior mgt chain.

None

¹⁷² Many of our models rely on broad regional averages for policy alignment. As more citizens engage and collect local data, these two arms will need to be harmonized in some fashion since it becomes part of the observation that science cannot ignore. Also, new symbols or vocabularies for representing abstract concepts can be useful for conveying the scientific process as it implements policy.

¹⁷³ Data management training could help reduce unintentional impacts to scientific integrity.

¹⁷⁴ Clear guidance on release of pending data (raw data) vs final validated data with interpretation and context.

¹⁷⁵ Just remember, if you torture the data long enough, it can say whatever you want it to say. The key is: What does it really say without the influence of the political winds?

¹⁷⁶ Reporting does not result in any change or feedback at EPA. Nothing happens.

¹⁷⁷ Deadline pressure and external influence are critically important and should have been more explored in my view.

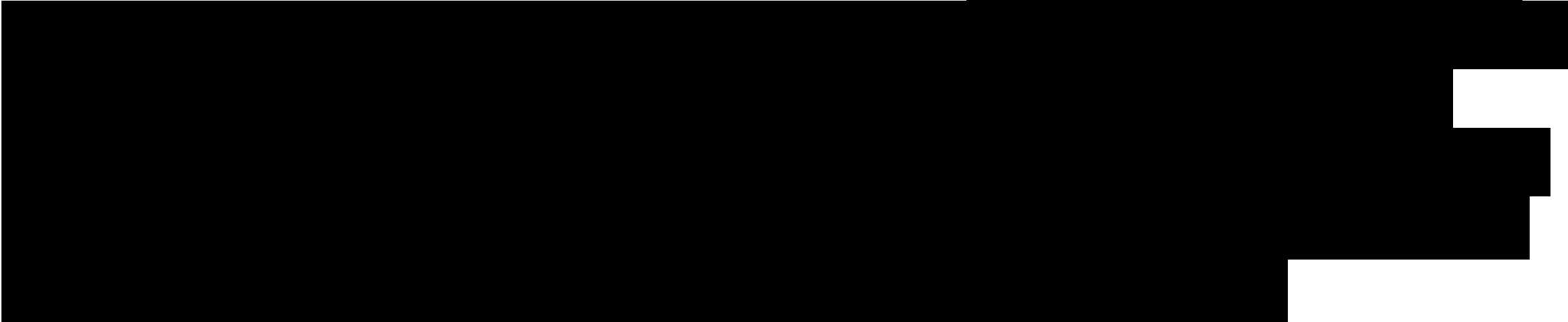
¹⁷⁸ Training for staff is not the issue, its management application which appears to lean to what ever the person in power wants. It will take a major mind set change to make a serious difference -- the tendency is very well ingrained.

¹⁷⁹ Thank you for working to collect information on this vital topic

¹⁸⁰ n/a

181

I will shut up until I leave EPA, I have not choice since I am no longer considered and environmental engineer. EPA is a great place to work. Most people at EPA have very high science integrity. (b) (5), (b) (6)



182 N/A

183

Our AA in (b) (6) seems to have the opinion that she is liberating staff from the previous administration ("science is back!") etc and protecting us from the big bad industry. However, being influenced by NGOs to make science policy decisions over staff recommendations is another form of influence and steamrolling career staff. I wonder if she might have a better sense of how her early decisions are being perceived by staff if we were not in a virtual and she could read everyone's body language.

184 Scientific integrity really isn't an issue. Nobody at the EPA follows the scientific method (at least not more than once).

185 this survey needs a lot of improvement

186

This is a very long survey, which everyone was encouraged to take. I do sympathize with the sentiment expressed by some scientists at a recent town hall that they are insulted by the notion that "science is back at EPA".

¹⁸⁷ 1) Listen to your front line scientists' concerns 2) Respond to your front line scientists' concern 3) Act on your front line scientists' concerns

¹⁸⁸ I think it would be great if more of the scientific integrity principles were incorporated into the annual ethics training. And I think many staff misunderstand that scientific integrity principles apply to the use of scientific information, not just the creation. For me, (b) (6), (b) (5)

I think if I had understood this better, perhaps through annual training with specific examples, I would have understood earlier that someone could help me if I came forward. I have spent a lot of energy in one-on-one meetings with these middle managers trying to convince them of the value of transparency, and in retrospect, that energy would probably have been better used just filing an allegation.

¹⁸⁹ Establish unbiased internal review process!

¹⁹⁰ n/a

¹⁹¹ Certain scientific / technical specialties seem to be lacking. For instance, there is no one I could identify as a statistician for my region.

¹⁹² The political appointees from the time period this survey asks about are no longer with EPA. How can they be held accountable?

¹⁹³ None

¹⁹⁴ Thank you for sending this survey. It was very well-thought-out. I am hopeful that the new political appointees will create a better environment for science in EPA.

¹⁹⁵ NA

¹⁹⁶ Perhaps have one survey for EPA scientists and a shorter tailored survey for non-science-based EPA employees.

¹⁹⁷ NA

¹⁹⁸ na

¹⁹⁹ Yes, you did not cover hiring and recruiting adequately. Engineers and scientists are retiring and being replaced by people with management, planning and policy training, but weak scientific understanding.

²⁰⁰ Education and expertise are critical. Without a foundation in scientific principles understanding the impact of a lack of scientific integrity throughout EPA will be lost. Managers that touch/manage anything including data should have appropriate expertise including an appropriate educational background.

²⁰¹ As long as we are committed to our duty to serve the public we have to continue to research and communicate to the public

²⁰² this survey was way too long

²⁰³

How are political appointees and their staff held accountable for respecting science? High level officials trying to "please" the administrator or the AAs.

²⁰⁴ NA

²⁰⁵ better involvement with stakeholders/ stop the vacuum decision-making process (inclusion of SME and outside government agencies)

²⁰⁶ Leaders set the tone and often control how issues that are raised will be addressed. That is key. One issue is with the scientists who can't accept disagreement or get personally wrapped up in one thing such that they can't accept criticism from peer reviewers (internal or external) or otherwise just can't come to closure to complete their document (maybe there is a need for more technical writing support).

Staffing and limitations in funding are both challenges, however I don't see either as a cause of or excuse for lapses in scientific integrity. Generally speaking I feel that (b) (6) and EPA has a strong culture of scientific integrity and my concerns related to scientific integrity generally are associated with political appointees and the practices they implement.

²⁰⁸ It seems like the new administration is very set on creating interpretations of certain situations as being Environmental Justice problems, and are willing to steamroll over technical/scientific uncertainties and to dismiss contradictory evidence in order to push such interpretations forward. Not the moral mess that the last administration represented, but a possible concern.

²⁰⁹ This survey has been quite inclusive of all potential concerns.

²¹⁰ Let the experts generate the data supporting a decision for the Agency, and management should consider those seriously before making any final decision.

²¹¹ NA

²¹² From my experience, when there is a difference in opinion between a cross agency workgroup and line management overseeing the project, often (okay, very often) the workgroup possess greater expertise and experience than management but management rules the day.

Many skilled political appointees are capable of influencing Agency decision-making without leaving a clear paper trail of those actions. It can be difficult to hold individuals accountable for such actions. At a minimum, any clear evidence of such politically-influenced decisions (especially those contradicting the recommendations provided by the supporting science) should be made public and re-examined. Individuals found guilty of such actions should be banned from future federal service.

²¹⁴ This is a horrible survey that seems to be leading to a conclusion. Also, if this is anonymous then why the need for an email address. Makes me trust this survey even less. Why are you asking about race, sexual identity, etc. If it is scientific integrity that you are concerned about, why is my sexual identity and race important. This is a concern that these issues are seeping into Scientific Integrity.

²¹⁵ Often the bar for acceptable data is so high that there are very limited useable data to support analysis and decision making. This has become worse with declining budgets dedicated to science-based organizations like EPA.

²¹⁶ Not part of my job.

²¹⁷ This is slightly off-topic, but we need a harmonized system of approving analytical methods for use in multiple regulatory programs. For example, the approved analytical methods for use in Clean Water Act programs are different from those used in the RCRA or CERCLA programs, even if analytes and matrices are the same. This creates unnecessary difficulties in collecting good quality data for both environmental assessment and enforcement purposes. We should be able to use any analytical method that meets data quality objectives.

²¹⁸ EPA's use of contracting needs to be overhauled. Long-term projects, software development, scientific inquiry and laboratory services are not transitory and therefore are "inherently governmental". Contracts should only be relied upon for short-term, "one-off" needs, and whenever possible EPA should invest in dedicated Federal Employees to undertake the fundamental science work, including computer science and software development.

²¹⁹ Its hard to judge if there is retaliation from upper management after making an ethical stand in terms of research funding, equipment and travel requests, and promotions/awards. Many folks may not be willing to make a stand if there is even a perceived potential for retaliation.

²²⁰ NA

²²¹ Thank you for this survey on scientific integrity. I hope it makes us better as an agency!

²²² N/A

²²³ None

²²⁴ None

²²⁵ none

226

Anyone who quit their job or felt forced out because of scientific integrity reasons during the last administration should get their jobs back and they should come forward in front of the world and say what happened and expose any wrong-doing. I didn't personally experience this in my region but know about this happening in the agency.

227

It is critical to ensure that there are standard practices and requirements for document decision-making so that the distinction between the scientific evaluation and recommendations and the policy decision-making is clearly documented and accountability for policy decisions not based on the science can be clearly seen in the agencies records and paper trails. Too many times in the past 4 years decision makers are unwilling to put their decisions and the basis for them in writing. In addition to scientific integrity being held in-tact and not interfered with, it is also critical in EPA that is an agency that is supposed to be making decisions based on high quality scientific information, to document policy decisions that deviate from the recommendations of technical staff and scientists based on the scientific research, knowledge and evaluation of scientific data and information.

228

Null

229 i don't this this survey or any of the trainings have blatantly discussed how something like the (b) (5) situation should have been handled at the GS14 and below. How do you deal with an integrity issue when you know your boss knows, when your boss's boss knows and when your boss's boss's boss knows until you are at the top of the ladder - then where do you go? Previously, i had been under the impression that you go chain of command in reporting and since i was having direct conversations with 1st and 2nd line managers - where do you go? Is there really even a reason to go anywhere else? I assumed that as managers they would have gone elsewhere if there was somewhere else to go. Those were my thoughts during the (b) (5).

I have heard lots of complaints about the trainings giving lots of information but it hasn't answered the real question that staff have. Even tho you are saying that "anyone" can report something - the piece that is missing is - if it is bad enough and your managers know and you don't see any corrective actions being made, that you would be a case you would want to report.

230 There should be an intentional outreach to EPA (b) (6) family to promote ideas, culture, and process to increase awareness of scientific integrity. There is currently not a "safe way" to report those and their actions, who violate scientific integrity principles. (b) (5)

231 N/A

232 SIO staff should have metrics, such as a requirement to give initial feedback within 2 weeks with a full report in 4 weeks. It should not take 6 months for a result.

233 No

No additional concerns but for awareness, the Inspector General community has an Integrity Committee that handles receives, reviews, and refers for investigation, as appropriate, allegations of wrongdoing made against: an Inspector General (IG), designated (high level) staff members of an Office of Inspector General, the Special Counsel, U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC), and the Principal Deputy Special Counsel, OSC, See:
<https://www.ignet.gov/cigie/committees/integrity-committee>

Decisions are made that affect both the high profile industries and the low profile industries - be sure to address all industries for which EPA is responsible. This may require additional staff and funding across the board. The review process should be improved for rulemaking development on the small topics for there is limited staff in this area. To support our lack of staff/resources we should all know that we have support to our north (Canada) and that their staff and labs are available. They take the lead on SAE papers and include EPA as co-author... in response to their support. EPA isn't its own ship - become a part of the work regulatory process going on and not put excess burden on industry because we think we have to have our own rules and regulations outside of the rest of the world.

N/A

Non-Scientists running their mouths about topics they have never researched (Climate Change)!

NA

²³⁹ I don't know that all scientific integrity issues result from the work of evil calculating people faking data or forcing changes in documents. Some of it may be couched in well-meaning strategies to maintain support for the agency and its staff. Integrity problems can be subtle. We should be careful about that also and devise ways to ensure transparency about issues that might fall along these lines.

²⁴⁰ Not applicable to my duties.

²⁴¹ none

²⁴² Integrity is one thing, but having enough time and resources to keep up with best available science and technology allows for ideal decisions. We need more funding in EPA; we all know this.

²⁴³ None

²⁴⁴ None

²⁴⁵ none

²⁴⁶ Not that I know of.

²⁴⁷ None

²⁴⁸ NONE

²⁴⁹ None.

²⁵⁰ N/A

²⁵¹ n/a

sometimes doing the right thing is uncomfortable. decision makers should put more stock in the science and less stock in their aversion to potentially finding themselves in an uncomfortable situation of protecting something that wasn't in immediate danger. we are the environmental protection agency; we should not hesitate to protect the environment because there isn't 100% certainty of harm. science is full of uncertainty. i'd like to see this discussed more. maybe decision makers need to understand that better. we can do a better job of protecting.

²⁵³ Very important to have opportunities for all personnel to discuss issues freely within the agencies. These opportunities should be available and encouraged with time set aside for them.

²⁵⁴ should appreciate those who volunteer for political service to EPA

²⁵⁵ N/A

²⁵⁶ Most questions needed an N/A, no basis for judgement or prefer not to answer. I made some choice were I debated whether or not to provide an answer.

It is difficult to know how scientific integrity fits into the regulatory process. Conjecture when evidence to the contrary is clearly disputable, but conjecture when evidence has not been clearly laid out is another. I'm sure there were failures of scientific integrity over the past two years. However, I'm not sure if a lack of willingness to listen to scientific issues with a regulatory analysis is a scientific integrity issue or a policy choice. Also, I wonder if career management made decisions to characterize scientific evaluations inconsistent with the best available science at the direction of political management, or simply the expectation that political management would look unfavorably on these choices.